

Remarks

Claims 22 and 23 are sought to be added. Claims 16 and 19 are sought to be amended. Upon entering this amendment, claims 1-23 are pending in the application, with 1, 16 and 19 being the independent claims.

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 1-15 were allowed.

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Based on the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(b)

Claims 16-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Published Application No. 2002/0036763 to Krikke et al. ("Krikke"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Amended independent claims 16 and 19 now recite a system and method, respectively, which generate and vary a field height **and** generate and vary a pupil of an illumination beam, such that illumination associated with the pupil has different optical characteristics than illumination associated with the field height.

Krikke teaches generating a pupil of an illumination beam using a diffraction optical element 14, adjusting the pupil of the illumination beam using axicon 15, and adjusting a size of the illumination beam using zoom system 16. However, the system of Krikke does not teach or suggest generating a field height separate from generating a pupil, such that illumination associated with the pupil has different optical characteristics than illumination associated with the field height, as now recited in claims 16 and 19.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the rejection. Also, at least based on their respective dependencies from claims 16 and 19, claims 17-18 and 20-23 should be found allowable over the applied reference.

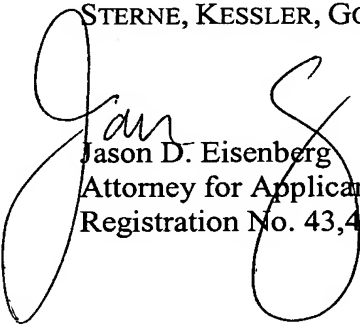
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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